

Posttrial HIV vaccine adoption: concerns, motivators, and intentions among persons at risk for HIV.

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BACKGROUND: Suboptimal uptake of existing vaccines, potential obstacles specific to HIV/AIDS stigma and mistrust, and marked health disparities suggest that it is vital to investigate consumer concerns, motivations, and adoption intentions regarding posttrial HIV vaccines before a vaccine is publicly available.

METHOD: Nine focus groups were conducted with participants (n = 99; median age, 33 years; 48% female; 22% African American, 44% Latino, and 28% white) recruited from 7 high-risk venues in Los Angeles using purposive venue-based sampling. A semistructured interview guide elicited concerns, motivators, and adoption intentions regarding hypothetical U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved HIV vaccines. Data were analyzed using narrative thematic analysis and Ethnograph qualitative software.

RESULTS: Concerns included vaccine efficacy, vaccine-induced infection, vaccine-induced HIV seropositivity, side effects, cost/access, trustworthiness, and relationship issues. Motivators included protection against HIV infection and the ability to safely engage in unprotected sex. Participants expressed reluctance to adopt partial efficacy vaccines and likelihood of increased sexual risk behaviors in response to vaccine availability.

CONCLUSION: Tailored interventions to facilitate uptake of future U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved HIV vaccines and to prevent risk behavior increases may be vital to the effectiveness of vaccines in controlling the AIDS pandemic.